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ABSTRACT

The answers to five questions concerning writing across the disciplines can help to define useful connections between literacy theory and writing across the curriculum classroom practice. First, the experiences of a director of writing programs at the University of Louisville who also taught English at the National University of Singapore, as well as an informal survey of courses in the United States, indicate that educators are not asking themselves the right questions as writing is moved across the disciplines. Second, a clearer and more complex understanding of literacy can help educators ask more useful questions. Third, recent theory provides strategies for combining monologic and dialogic perspectives on literacy. The concepts of heteroglossia and cognitive stereoscopy describe language's potential to bring together in the act of expression multiple social and individual perspectives. Fourth, questions phrased as binary opposition must be transformed into "both-and" rather than "either-or" questions. Fifth, writers become "rhetorically consciousness" when they are able to enter a writing context and define the relationships among the various structures within it. An example from technical writing (in which rhetoric and document design are put together) shows that sometimes the most complex theories of literacy are most clearly represented in functional rather than literacy texts, and it is within those functional contexts that the need for sound rhetorical analysis of context becomes most apparent. (Forty references are attached.) (RS)

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Writing Across the Disciplines: Where Do We Go from Here?

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1. Focusing Questions

I plan to take a relatively complex line of inquiry in this paper. To help you follow that line, I shall present five questions that will be central to each section of the paper.

1.1. Are We Asking Ourselves the Right Questions As We Move Writing Across the Curriculum?

1.2. How Might a Clearer and More Complex Understanding of Literacy Help Us Ask More Useful Questions As We Move Writing Across the Curriculum?

1.3. Does Recent Theory Provide Us With Strategies for Combining Monologic and Dialogic Perspectives on Literacy?

1.4. What Questions Should We Be Asking?

1.5. What is **Rhetorical Consciousness**, and How Might It Help Us As We Move Writing Across the Curriculum?

I hope the questions that evolve from this inquiry will help us define useful connections between literacy theory and writing across the curriculum classroom practice.

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1.1. Are We Asking Ourselves the Right Questions As We Move Writing Across the Curriculum?

I need to provide some personal background before I attempt to answer this question. This background includes a few comments describing my experience while directing two writing programs, one at the University of Louisville and the other at the National University of Singapore. At the University of Louisville, I helped develop a writing across the disciplines program that was to function as an important part of the university's new general education requirements. At the National University of Singapore, I worked for a year on the English Department's new rhetoric and composition program, which at this university was an advanced program for English majors. Both experiences provided valuable perspectives on the problems that occur when faculties attempt to construct cross-disciplinary writing programs.

Writing Across the Disciplines at Louisville

Between 1986 and 1988 the University of Louisville decided to revise its Undergraduate general education requirements. This meant moving from a smorgasbord of distribution requirements to a core of content and methods courses, to be supported by both departments offering special courses growing out of their professional, cross-disciplinary expertise (i.e., English and writing; fine arts and aesthetic enrichment) and by area courses that would also carry a general education function (i.e., writing, speaking, and critical thinking-intensive courses in different

disciplines).

The intentions were laudably complex and theoretically coherent. But the problems the revision came to face were political, pedagogical, conceptual, and human. These problems can be characterized by examples, all drawn from the writing components of the program: first, teachers in disciplines who were to propose and teach intensive courses in skills always seemed to see the "skill" side of the content-skill learning continuum as an adjunct or "add-on" in which mechanistic forms could be used to help students manage "content"; second, teachers in disciplines who did not teach or propose skill intensives inevitably left skills out of their courses altogether, often breathing a long sigh of relief; and third, those who taught "skills" as part of their experience inevitably had to give short shrift to content (i.e., numbers of texts read) so as to give fuller and more integrated treatment to the "skill," such as writing, which most of us knew was a way of knowing as well as a way of doing.

The result, understandably, was a new kind of "smorgasbord," one in which courses distributed over areas such as social and natural sciences and humanities were replaced by a bizarre catalogue of course numbers followed by symbols such as W for writing intensive, S for speech intensive, and P for performance intensive. The general education committee at work on this new collection of courses in its draft form, of which I was a member, in its lighter moments discussed the possible function of courses symbols like US for unscientific, E for entertaining, and IU for Ideologically unaware. But we forged ahead with the new smorgasbord anyhow.

Could we at Louisville have avoided the New Smorgasbord approach? Looking back, I think not. And I think that way because, in retrospect, I can see more clearly that the answer was not to replace one distribution plan with another, but to replace that emphasis on distribution itself. But, in turn, the reason that it is so difficult to see the problem as it really is is because, in universities especially, we have so fully embraced twentieth-century industrial models of specialization. We find it difficult as professors even to imagine that dialogue and dialectic might occur within and between courses, that knowing and doing are usually in a delicate state of interacting balance rather than occurring one after the other, or one on top of the other, or in some kind of linear sequence.

Writing Across the Disciplines at the National University of Singapore

The second story I'd like to fold into this talk addresses an institutional context that has permeated the situations within which I have worked from the beginning of my career. About a year ago I returned from a year of teaching in the English Department at the National University of Singapore. During that year I helped a small writing staff at the University, most of whom were and had been learning rhetoric and composition from American Colleagues such as Chuck Bazerman, Lester Faigley, and myself, develop a writing minor, to be taken by all university English majors. These majors, unlike English majors in the States, were badly needed by the Singaporean economy. They were needed to do the higher

literacy work of banking firms, investment companies, government bureaucracies, foreign service agencies, and high-tech communication companies of all kinds. In sum, only a few of these students would go on to graduate professional training in law, only a rare exception to graduate study in literature. These students, bright, well-educated, and sometimes multi-lingual, Singapore's paternalistic government would encourage to take on useful jobs in business and industry in a developing industrial economy.

Here is where the Singapore situation becomes interesting and problematic. The English faculty at the National University of Singapore is about evenly divided between ex-patriot and local professors of literature and applied linguistics. Both are trained in the British system (except for a few European text-linguists and sociolinguists, and an occasional American rhetorician like me): the first in the traditional British sense of literary history and criticism and the belletristic and critical essay, the second in a more contemporary sense of linguistic analysis derived from the systemic theories of Michael Halliday, who had visited the University for a semester in 1986. The result was a curious split in the faculty's perception of the function and purpose of the writing minor. The literatures, as I shall call them, saw the writing program as in a large sense a subordinate but important part of the students' overall liberal education, as a program in which the ideas students had worked out in reading and discussing literary works would be subjected to the creative and critical rigors of essay-writing. The literatures brought to this endeavor a sense of genre as a dynamic, changing, and dialogic concept which could not be simply "fitted into," or casually imitated by

students. For the literatures, and I often felt an affinity with them in faculty meetings, on this issue at least, genres were discovered, appropriated, and re-shaped according to the individual writer's intention. In fact, for these professors, students had a responsibility not to copy the moves of a conventional genre, but to manipulate them in creating voices and meanings of their own.

The linguists carried a wholly different perspective into this dialogue. Systemic linguists in the Hallidayean mode build their understandings of texts out of enormous amounts of descriptive and ethnographic research (Halliday 1985, 29). One of them, for example, had taken the genre and register of sports-writing and examined tons of examples in all kinds of contexts. Then, using Halliday's complex system of mode, tenor, and register, he had developed a classificatory model of that genre, setting out its characteristic lexicon and rhetorical structure. As writing teachers, these applied linguists wanted to teach students the "moves" they needed to make in order to operate within these functional genres -- what to say first, second, and third, with some discussion of why, and to leave the complexities of genre-overlap and originality to later developments.

You can imagine the difficulty I had, even with the license for trouble-making often freely granted to ex-patriots by host institutions, in attempting to reconcile these different perspectives into coherent rhetorical strategies for developing this new writing program. But the real point of my describing this experience is to set out in fairly simple terms two themes of the talk I am presenting to you today. The first focuses on these conflicting senses of literacy -- for simplicity's sake let's call

them the dialogic and the monologic. The second theme focuses on the difficulties we all seem to have combining these senses of literacy. It is simply easier for us, and on us, to see them as mutually exclusive and in binary opposition, rather than as mutually informing and necessary aspects of any conversation about cross-curricular programs.

What are the implications of these two stories for those of us interested in developing cross-curricular writing programs? I suggest that they can help us define what has become a major issue in such programs -- whether or not cross-curricular writing courses should emphasize the forms usually used in the discipline communities that these courses represent, or whether they should emphasize more general abilities that we might equate with higher literacies of all kinds. Right now my informal survey of courses in the United States would suggest that most programs move in one direction or the other -- some are form-oriented, others are interested in promoting general critical understandings that will help students construct texts in any discourse context -- but few are prepared to combine these perspectives (Fulwiler @ Young 1982, 1990; McLeod 1988, 1989; Connally and Vilardi, 1986; Bazerman 1990).

This brings me back to the question that heads this section of my talk. To answer that question as directly as I can, "no, we are often not asking the right questions as we move writing across the curriculum." The reasons behind that answer lie within our restrictive notions of literacy, and within out pedagogical attempts to go in either one direction (form-oriented courses) or another (process-oriented courses), rather than in two directions

at once.

Perhaps the cross-disciplinary writing fields of technical writing and writing as learning can provide useful, contrastive examples of what I mean. Technical writing, as many recent theorists within the field itself have demonstrated (Souther, Mitchell and Smith, in Fearing and Sparrow, 1-13; 117-127), has long been influenced by formal or "template"-driven pedagogies. The idea was to gather together an array of templates and formats that would represent the kind of writing done in particular divisions of organizations and corporations. Usually these texts were reports of some kind, perhaps persuasive reports for managers or implementation reports for technicians. Courses would then be organized around these report formats, with perhaps one type of report required of each of five or six course units (see Pauley and Riordan for a textbook example). Enlightened teachers of such courses would certainly do more than simply have students fill in the blanks on these forms; they would guide discussions toward the theoretical contexts within which these forms were used in the workplace to give students a sense of why they were used, at least whenever the assignments and students allowed such digressions (see Mathes and Stevenson for a textbook example). But even in these best-intentioned of format driven courses, where rhetoric and process were brought in wherever possible, primary emphasis consistently remained on literacy as a monologic process. Textual formats were used to direct the writing process and considerations of context toward the understanding that textual forms used by individual writers for stated organizational purposes could be applied to <u>any</u> organizational writing context. This approach is

monologic because it assumes that the writer him or herself as manager of information formats can produce effective texts without a concomitant understanding of the "web" of discourses existing in this complex organizational context.

Let me turn in my second example of (those cross-disciplinary teachers who emphasize writing as learning) to a very different perspective on the same problem (Fulwiler and Young 1982). I work in a department well known for fostering this approach, and I find much that is valuable in it. But writing-as-learning, with its emphasis on writing as a means of supporting students' efforts to master course content, can also ignore the complex social dimensions within which texts are constructed in any complex discourse community. Planning, for example, to use journals as a means of mastering subject matter or of constructing more personal interactions with peers or teachers may well help teachers learn course content in a more thorough way. But only when journal writing is directed toward understanding audience and purpose will it help develop flexible writing abilities. Writing-as-learning, in other words, also often leaves out the important rhetorical dimension of writing, and it, too, can reduce writing to a monologic rather than dialogic process by encouraging the sense that learning to write is a matter of getting individuals to manage text-making almost entirely on their own. Even the successful journal-writer who has learned to create distance between text and self by writing <u>about</u> the process of learning itself -- by, let us say, interpreting interpretation itself, or by creating a dialogue with a teacher-expert in a technical field -- has not in any important way experienced the network of social relationships that

exist within complex discourse communities.

I suggest that this dichotomy exists because we, as potential leaders in the writing across disciplines movement, have failed to do two things. First, we have often failed to engage the teachers with whom we work in discussions that encourage them to question their basic understanding of literacy itself. Second, we have failed to relate assumptions about how literacy works to questions of how we might combine formal and rhetorical perspectives in writing courses (Miller 1984, 151). If we were, at this point, to put serious effort behind filling the gaps that have been created by our failing to address these two essential questions, we could make real curricular and theoretical progress. Let me then go on to address that underlying theoretical question.

1.2. How Might a Clearer and More Complex Understanding of Literacy Help Us Ask More Useful Questions As We Move Writing Across the Curriculum?

We really cannot answer this question in any definitive way -- not yet. But we can look to some pertinent recent research to help us at least begin to inform our approaches to literacy in cross-disciplinary university writing courses.

At the risk of oversimplifying, I want to describe two now-opposing theories of literacy. The monologic tradition has consistently since the evolution of print and the earliest periods of Western industrialization focused on the individual and his or her function within a complex technological system. Conservative monologic theorists have developed primarily prescriptive methods

of educating for literacy, with writing and reading seen as crafts to be learned by apprentices who were striving to fit into this technological system. Often, at least until very recently, literacy programs related to naturalization processes, job training, and government agencies and the military included teaching individuals only those skills they would need to fit into particular industrial roles (Ohmann 1976, 223). American university writing programs were directed toward such prescriptive-skill approaches with the growth of land-grant universities and freshman English programs in the late nineteenth and early twentieth-centuries (Berlin 1984, 58-76).

Lately culturally and educationally-progressive theorists and practioners have developed more sophisticated and less prescriptive monologic approaches to literacy teaching and learning. Perhaps the most prominent and theoretically-complex example of these later monologic theories is the cognitive-processing model of writing developed by Flower and Hayes (1981) in the 1970's at Carnegie Mellon University. This approach describes text production as driven by a complex interaction between mental generating and planning processes. The effective writer is able, according to this model, to manage the cognitive processes of memory (long and short term), the balancing of new and old information, the act of planning through the development of text-making strategies that are reader as well as writer-centered. Perhaps most significant for this theory as an essentially monologic model of literacy processing is its reliance on an external "monitor" by which writers control their individual cognitive processes as they write (Flower and Hayes 1981, 370, 374-375). Most often this monitoring

mechanism is described in terms synonymous with a conservative notion of genre. In other words, socially-constructed forms of discourse, often generated by disciplines, fields, or larger discourse communities, intervene at critical moments of generation, planning, and production of text to provide a loose template into which writers can put their meanings.

In the end, we should not allow the elegance and complexity of the Flower and Hayes model to blind us to the fact that the model is essentially monologic; it fosters the notion that literacy is essentially a social process through which individuals are fitted into a technological system of communication in which specialists produce texts that have a particular function/role within a complex system or network of texts (Bizzell 1982, 220-223). That system, in the end, governs the production of individual texts, yet readers and writers continue to produce those texts primarily in isolation from one another.

More recently theorists such as Bruffee (1984), Bartholomae (1985), Trimbur (1988), Cooper and Holzman (1989), and others, have criticized this cognitive model by looking at it from a broader social perspective. Perhaps the best example of this criticism was represented in a 1986 essay published in College English by Marilyn Cooper. Explaining what she calls the "ecology" of writing, Cooper argues that "[T]he metaphor for writing suggested by the ecological model is that of a web, in which anything that affects one strand of the web vibrates throughout the whole" (9). Here we go beyond static notions of audiences "invoked or addressed" (Ede and Lunsford 1984, 156) -- which always exist inside the mind of an individual -- to the idea that writers exist within dynamic

contexts of interacting systems. Changes in one system alter the ecology, and changes in ecology affect writers in subtle but significant ways. Another way to put this is to say that even specialists' texts are influenced by the network of systems -- the web -- within which their texts function. This kind of focus brings composition teachers into the fields usually reserved for the expert in organizational communication, where rhetorical analysis of complex structures may be the teacher's quickest route to promoting writing as social action.

Lest I seem, however, to have set up what in the end I think a false dichotomy, let me counter that impression by stating explicitly that my own teaching convinces me that both of these contending perspectives on literacy have real value in cross-disciplinary writing courses. We need to use conventional forms, but not as templates whose blanks are completed in mechanical ways. Rather, such forms help us most when we use them heuristically, as probes with which we have our students examine rhetorical situations, encouraging them to ask the kinds of contextual questions that will lead them to compare representative forms with the goals, objectives, motives, and needs of the social organizations or communities within which they are used. Maintaining this delicate pedagogical balance between form and context demands that we change our definitions of literacy and our ways of presenting assignments and the forms that normally are associated with them.

1.3. Does Recent Theory Provide us with Strategies for Combining Monologic and Dialogic Perspectives on

Literacy?

I do not have the time here to review all the recent work in literary theory (Fish 1980, Comprone 1987) educational literacy research (Heath 1983, Langer 1989) and rhetoric and composition (Winterowd 1989, Comprone 1978, Tuman 1987) that encourages the synthesis of monologic and dialogic theories. But I can provide a close look at two concepts -- heteroglossia (Bakhtin 1981, Morson 1986) and cognitive stereoscopy (Bleich 1988) -- drawn from literary theorists who have fostered interdependency between the monologic and dialogic. Many literary and composition theorists have recently appropriated from Mikhail Bakhtin his notion of textual heteroglossia. This concept provides us, as teachers and critics, with new ways of looking at text. Rather than seeing lines of print linearly reproduced down a page, with sections and chapters displayed in linear progression, the notion of textual heteroglossia encourages us to hear the multitude of voices within a text, to hear the echoes or reverberations of different social contexts within the languages represented in a text. At first, because Bakhtin's use of heteroglossia evolved from his study of the novel, literary theorists and critics applied his thinking directly to fictional narrative (Bakhtin 1981, 3-40). Novels and stories were examined for the layers of language they represented, with narrators, characters, and dramatized or "overheard" voices embedded within the linguistic structure of texts.

But more recently writers such as Andrea Lunsford and Lisa Ede (1986) and Charles Shuster (1985) have encouraged us to hear this competing array of voices in non-fictional prose, and in

collaboratively-written organizational documents. In other words, no matter how expository or referential or utilitarian the text, it will reflect the voices and language structures of more than one author. In this sense, all texts are plural, in that they represent collaboration, conversation, oral presentation -- often from individuals representing different fields and language registers, different class backgrounds, and different personalities. The notion of heteroglossia then encourages us to look through the words on the page into the embedded plurality of social and political dimensions of text. And that encouragement applies even as we look at, or through, technical documents produced in formal, organizational settings because what we will hear when we do look behind what we see on the page are the voices of many private conversations, informal written communications, technical jargons, political intrigues, and interpersonal communications of various kinds.

Let me return at this point to our second term -- cognitive stereoscopy. This term has been David Bleich's favorite since he introduced it in 1978 (40). It has helped Bleich explain how individual and social, indeed multiple, perspectives are at work in any given text. As Bleich puts it:

> ...from the smallest to the largest scales of language experience, any language/literate act depends on double or multiple perspectives held by members of the speaking community, and that to analyze any language/literate act, the stipulation of double or multiple perspectives will be part of the explanatory procedure (Bleich 1988, 88).

Reduced back to the language of this paper, Bleich's words

remind us that even the smallest part of a text holds in itself residues of individual and social history. Bleich reinforces this insight by re-telling his favorite anecdote from his favorite case history: Helen Keller's re-learning of language with Annie Sullivan's help (Bleich 1988, 90-96). After a good deal of working together, Keller and Sullivan produce what Bleich feels is a true moment of stereoscopic cognition. Helen feels Sullivan utter the word "water" as she feels water run over her hand and is re-introduced to linguistic naming in all its complexity. What Bleich points out in interpreting this incident are the multiple perspectives at work during this moment of insight.

First, the cognitive and affective domains are brought to bear simultaneously in that the emotional bonding of Helen and Annie creates the trust that enables Helen to make the cognitive or symbolic connection between word and immediate experience. Second, the immediate social occasion is connected by Helen with her own dimly-remembered (she went blind at nineteen months of age) pre-linguistic past. And, of course, the physical sensation of water running over her hand and the social experience of feeling Annie utter the word also combine to create this moment. These three complex perspectives, then, are all brought to bear on the textual moment marked by the utterance of the word <u>water</u>.

Heteroglossia and cognitive stereoscopy, then, describe our language's potential to bring together in the act of expression these multiple social and individual perspectives. No linguistic act is ever, according to Bakhtin and Bleich, separable from its immediate, social, and historical context. To understand literacy is to understand that monologic and dialogic aspects of language

use and development are totally interdependent.

1.4. What Questions Should We Be Asking?

To bring this world of theory back to the pedagogical here and now of cross-curricular writing programs, I shall suggest both a few new questions to replace those we are asking now and a strategy for answering those new questions.

Too many of us, particularly as we relate theory to practice, ask questions like these:

> Is writing process or product?
>
> Is writing art or craft?
>
> Should we attend to form or content?
>
> Should we give priority to text or context?
>
> Should we give priority to the individual writer or the discourse community?

Even in asking these questions most experienced writing teachers feel uncomfortable. Some even squirm in their seats while giving them voice. Nonetheless, they continue to stand behind many of our professional arguments. Yet concepts such as heteroglossia and cognitive stereoscopy should be telling us that these questions of binary opposition must be transformed into what Kenneth Burke called "both-and", rather than "either-or," questions:

> How does writing work if we see it as process <u>and</u> product?
>
> In what ways is writing both art and craft, even at one and the same time?

How can we as teachers and writers attend to both form and content, perhaps simultaneously?

How can we attend to both text and context?

How can we value individual writers and their intentions as we recognize that texts are to some degree constructed by discourse communities?

I would argue that such seemingly simple re-phrasing of essential questions can lead to powerful strategies for connecting theory with teaching practice. At this point, I can only begin to suggest what these new connections might be. This suggested connection will also lead me to the last in my series of focusing questions.

1.5. What Is Rhetorical Consciousness, and How Might It Help Us As We Move Writing Across the Curriculum?

Let me take a quick stab at defining rhetorical consciousness. In doing so, I shall return to Marilyn Cooper's web metaphor. Writers, whether student or professional, become rhetorically conscious when they are able to enter a writing context and define the relationships among the various structures within it. This means, at first, learning to identify the motives and purposes of different parts of the discourse community within which a text will function, and it means recognizing the relationships that exist between and among the many strands and relational nodes within the communication networks that make up the contextual web of meaning.

To shift to a lower and more concrete level of abstraction, we teach writers to become rhetorically conscious when we involve them in complex considerations of purposes and audiences, on secondary and tertiary as well as primary levels. In such a complex context, discovering discourse communities and the audiences and purposes embedded in them becomes the most important aspect of writing pedagogy as we move across the curriculum. Teaching students to read context, to perceive and set in motion the strands of the web, every time they construct a text, becomes an important part of every writing assignment.

2. An Example from Technical Writing: Putting Rhetoric and Document Design Together.

However metaphorical the figure of the web may have made this discussion, I can bring us back to the more functional writing by closing with a reference to technical communication. I am currently teaching such a course at Michigan Technological University. Most of you know that for decades teachers of technical writing have argued the strengths and weaknesses of open and closed, or rhetorical versus format-driven pedagogies (Souther 1989, Mitchell and Smith 1989, Connors 1982). The question, however, is <u>not</u> whether or not such courses should be built around document templates and conventional formats. Rather, the essential question is, how can we as teachers show students the purposes behind these conventional forms, and how as well can we help them use those forms to achieve ethical and sometimes original purposes (Sullivan 1990)?

This past term I have decided to work toward these objectives by putting organizational communication and rhetoric together. I am using J.C. Mathes and Dwight Stevenson's Designing Technical Reports, a textbook that emphasized report-writing in organizational contexts. Mathes and Stevenson assert that well over fifty percent of effective corporate and industrial writing grows out of a careful reading and interpretation of organizational situations, most particularly of the often multiple audiences and purposes of any complex report. Often these reports are directed to a primary audience of managerial decision-makers, a secondary audience of production personnel, sometimes even tertiary audiences in, perhaps, marketing or research design. And purpose is just as complex. Managerial audiences must be persuaded; production audiences are usually users who must be informed and shown how; marketing and advertising divisions often need persuasion and information; budget and finance departments require precise assessments of costs.

Most organizations have developed textual formats for all of these report audiences or purposes. But they are not meant to function as templates. Rather, they are to be managed by communicators adept at creating what Bakhtin calls a heteroglossic text. In this case, however, in contrast to literacy text, the glosses are explicitly designed into each report. Persuasive purposes are developed in overview sections, informative in discussion sections, and detailed analysis and instructions in documentation sections. Simple and direct visuals may supplement overviews; more precise and complex tables and charts support discussion sections, but usually must be referred to appendices in

a documentation section. Every decision concerning what to put where is up to the individual, group, or team producing the text. In essence, writers in corporate settings function as information managers, designing texts that speak in various languages, some specialized, others direct and accessible, for various audiences and purposes. Each part of a formal report might be read quickly by one audience for one purpose, more carefully by another for yet another purpose, while being simply used as a reference by a third.

I would argue that most effective report writers also have a healthy amount of cognitive stereoscopy as well. They, like all writers of complex texts, must hold several audiences and purposes in balance at once. What the manager wants to know is often not what the production line personnel needs to build the machine. And what the writer's fellow specialists may understand will not make much sense to the marketing division.

Texts containing many glosses and addressing several audiences with as many different purposes often must be written by groups or teams. This term I am having each student take on the responsibility of working in groups to produce a final report. As the term progresses, they will each become the primary author of one part of the report: the visual expert and computer whiz may choose documentation, the student with a persuasive touch the overview, the most experienced at systematic, consistent presentation of information the discussion. But each group member will also serve as a secondary or supporting author of someone else's section. Every group member will also rotate in the role of drafting, editing, or revision expert, for at least a two-week period.

I hope this description makes two simple points clear. It ought to show us that sometimes the most complex theories of literacy are most clearly represented in functional rather than literary texts. And it is within those functional contexts that the need for sound rhetorical analysis of context, and for the kind of systematic designing of texts that follow from those analysis, becomes most apparent.

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